

# JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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## THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST ACTS IN BIENNIAL CONVENTION

The United Church of Christ in Japan, meeting at Fujimicho Church in Tokyo from October 21-24, passed with a unanimous standing vote a special plan of evangelism for the Centennial year approaching which includes the mobilization of all churches and auxiliaries in this effort. They increased their total budget ¥6,080,000 over last year and voted a resolution against the new revision of the Police Duties Law as proposed by the government party in the national Diet. They also elected a new Moderator and Executive Board.

Called to head the largest Protestant church in Japan as its new Moderator is the Rev. Keikishi Shirai, 76 year old pastor of the Chiyoda Church in Tokyo. The Rev. Shirai brings to this post a wealth of experience as a Seminary professor and pastor over a period of more than 40 years. Educated at the Presbyterian Seminary in Tokyo, McCormick and Princeton Seminaries in the United States, he returned to his native Japan to become a professor at the Tokyo seminary. 30 years as pastor of a church in Manchuria followed and when the end of the war brought him back to Japan with a large group of repatriates, he organized them into the Chiyoda Church in Tokyo, which he has served continuously as minister since its organization.







The second important post in the church is now held by the Rev. samu Omura, 57 year old pastor of the Asagaya Church, also in Tokyo. Rev. Omura is a graduate of Aoyama Gakuin Theology department and has studied at Boston University. He has been serving the United Church as head of the strategic Joint Committee for Evangelism. The new chairman of the Joint Evangelism Committee is the Fujimicho church pastor, the Rev. Kikaku Shimamura who held the same post two years ago.

The momentous convention was opened by the Moderator, Rev. Muto, who preached a sermon which emphasized evangelism in the coming centennial year. He made two salient points: 1) To strengthen evangelism is the duty of the Church. All the powers of the Church must enter this effort, he insisted. 2) The advice of St. Paul to the Corinthian Christians to always remember the cross of Christ must be heeded by 20th century Christians as we remember that while Buddhists evangelize out of pity, we do it for a witness of the love of God.

Following Moderator Muto's sermon, the delegates began balloting for new officers and executive committee members. The Rev. Muto was elected to the Executive Committee.

The total budget for the coming year is ¥169,345,000 which represents an increase of over six million yen more than the budget for the previous year. A breakdown of the budget follows:

Running Expenses.....	¥ 8,960,000.
Evangelism Fund.....	38,890,000.
Work Budget	
Committees, Etc.....	9,418,000.
Pension & Retirement.....	8,260,000.
Emergency Budget	
church buildings, subsidy for	
pastors, children's education	
fund, kindergarten workers,	
Etc.....	44,180,000.
Loan Fund.....	9,987,000.
Publishing.....	47,350,000.
Headquarters Building Fund	
Maintenance of old building	
& provision for new.....	<u>2,300,000.</u>

Total Budget ¥169,345,000.

Of the total foregoing budget the support of the co-operating mission boards in America comes to a total of ¥71,328,000. The remainder is raised in Japan.

A general financial report was made to the convention based on statistics of two years ago which showed some interesting figures as to the average layman's gifts to the church in one year. Two years ago the average layman gave ¥269. in one month in his pledged offering envelopes. This represents an increase of 69% over gifts received four years ago. In the Sunday offering taken during the worship







services, the average was 23.3 yen two years ago which represents a 59% increase over the report four years ago. (Because so many of those attending services in Japan are not members of the church, the offerings at worship services are taken separately from the pledge envelopes of members of the church.) One member gives 6,410 yen on an average for one year for church maintenance. Adding emergencies such as unusual repairs to the church, the total received from members for upkeep of the church during one year is ¥8,160.

The statistical report showed an increase in every area except that of Sunday School attendance. The major items on the statistical report with a comparison to last year's report are printed here:

	April, 1956--March, 1957	April, 1957--March, 1958
Churches and Preaching Stations	1528	1536
Active Pastors and Evangelists	1446	1501
Total Membership (Average membership in one church is 120.)	172,166	175,506
Active Membership	97,265	99,196
Lost Membership (Still kept on list of members)	39,512	40,614
Members Moved Away (But still active)	28,499	28,961
Baptized Child Membership	6,820	6,735
Baptisms--Adult	7,521	7,424
Child	407	436
Church Attendance		
Sunday Morning	48,537	50,296
Prayer Meeting	12,118	12,204
Sunday School	91,508	89,656
Total Offerings	¥310,230.	¥342,597.
Expenses	¥278,769.	¥304,154.







# LUTHERAN LITERATURE SOCIETY OPENS KUMAMOTO BRANCH

The formal opening of the Kumamoto Book Store of the Lutheran Literature Society is set for tomorrow afternoon, Sunday, November 2, in the Kyushu City which has been a seat of Lutheran Missionary effort for many years. The Lutheran Literature Society itself, is a post-war effort of all the Lutheran missions at work in Japan, and has had book stores operating in Tokyo, Nagoya, and Kobe for some time. The main office in Tokyo houses the editorial offices and publishing house.

Two days of executive meetings were held last week to discuss the on-going work of the Society with the possibility of a new store in Osaka dominating the agenda. Other big news is the approval of a gift franchise by the Lutheran Church Productions, Incorporated, for sending the MARTIN LUTHER film to Japan. The Japanese government has approved the import of one print from which ten prints will be made in Japan. In spite of the tremendous task of translating the script and having the dialogue "dubbed in" in Japanese, the Society expects to have the film ready for use in Japan by next Spring. The nature of the import agreement is such that the film may be used for evangelistic or educational purposes only, therefore it will be shown in churches and schools without ticket sales.

The staff in Tokyo is headed by the Rev. Shiro Aoyama, editorial secretary; and the Rev. William Billow, acting promotional secretary while Rev. Douglas Swenseid is on furlough.

## BURMESE STUDENT PIONEERS AT ICU AND AVACO

This year, in a pioneering experiment, an Asian student is studying audio-visual activities and mass communication in a joint program set up by International Christian University and the Christian Audio Visual Center (AVACO) in Tokyo.

Mr. Ernest G. Samson, Associate Secretary of the Audio Visual Activities Committee of the Burmese Christian Council, is on a one year scholarship provided through RAVEMCCO, the Radio, Audio Visual Education organ of the Division of Foreign Missions (NCC, USA). Thirty-one years old and an earnest Christian layman, Mr. Samson served as a Captain in the Burmese army before coming to his present position.

Living on the ICU campus, Mr. Samson is taking courses in audio-visual theory, techniques and related subjects under doctors Nishimoto and Taylor of the Education Department. Each Thursday he spends at AVACO studying AV administration, recording techniques, leadership training methods, the use of AV materials and related subjects.

The suggestion that Asian students should, where possible, study in Asia, was endorsed initially at the first Asia Conference on Mass Communication, held in Bangkok in 1955. The main values of such a program are that it is up to 50% cheaper, and the kinds of materials, the theory and the environment are psychologically and economically more at the level at which the student will be working upon his return.







If this first experiment proves successful other Asian students may be sent to Japan, to the Philippines or to India, and eventually perhaps only the top administrative leadership in the radio/a-v field will be sent to the U.S.A. or England.

#### AVACO SPONSORS "SONGS OF THE HEART MOVEMENT"

In an effort to get out where the people are with the Gospel, AVACO has set up, in cooperation with the various churches and organizations of the NCC, a special committee to launch a "Songs of the Heart" Movement. Through Leadership training, publications, the publication of a special small collection of hymns, and mass meetings, the attempt will be made to start singing groups within factories and offices. Singing hymns and folk songs together, these groups will present opportunities for Christian witness by participating laymen or ministers.

The name of the movement comes from AVACO's radio program, "Songs of the Heart", now being broadcast over three stations weekly, including coverage of the two most populous areas of Japan, containing a fifth to a quarter of the total population. The groups of the movement will be related to the program in various ways.

There is a great opportunity in such a movement, because Japanese young people love to sing and are hungry for fellowship. The "Utageo" movement, launched by the Communists several years back, is based on the recognition of these factors.

#### NATIONAL YWCA HOLDS THIRTEENTH TRIENNIAL CONVENTION

Two-hundred and twenty delegates from all over Japan met in the Tokyo YWCA building at Surugadai in their 13th Triennial Convention on October 16, 17.

Mrs. Kamaki Uemura, an ordained pastor in the Presbyterian Church, was re-elected President. The two vice-chairman elected are Miss Teruko Aomiy, professor at Tokyo Women's Christian College, and Mrs. Kiyoko Yuasa, the wife of the President of International Christian University.

Besides revisions of the national YWCA by-laws and regulations, the delegates joined many other Christian and civic groups in taking a resolution against the passage of the Kishi Cabinet sponsored revision of the Police Duties Law. The content of the resolution pointed out that from the standpoint of a Christian organization seeking to protect and preserve human dignity and freedom, the YWCA must oppose this bill as dangerous to human rights and democratic society.







NCC EXECUTIVE ACTS AGAINST REVISION OF POLICE LAW

The Executive Committee of the National Christian Council met in special session on Friday afternoon, October 31, to consider the dangers inherent in the proposed revision of the Police Duties Law. They adopted a unanimous resolution against revision during the present session of the Diet.

Text of the NCC resolution follows:

"We, the members of the Executive Board of the National Christian Council of Japan, meeting in special session on October 31, urgently contend that, the proposed Diet Bill to amend the Police Duties' Law, which at present is the focus of public concern, has created much fear of possible misuse of police power and constitutes a threat to fundamental human rights which form the basis of our Constitution.

"It is not in accord with the spirit of democratic government to present such an amendment bill to the Diet so suddenly and try to pass it by the strength of majority power.

"Therefore, we most earnestly desire that the above mentioned bill be handled cautiously and fairly and oppose the effort to pass this bill hastily during the present session of the Diet."

This action by the Executive Committee follows similar resolutions by the Kansai Area Section of the Education Association of Christian Schools in Japan, the National YWCA, the United Church of Christ in Japan, the national YMCA, WCTU and many other civic and religious bodies.

Members of the Executive Board explain privately that they fear a recurrence of practices which the police employed during the war years when personal freedoms were greatly restricted.



